

Title: An Epistemic Bridge for Presupposition Projection in Questions

Abstract:

It is often assumed that presuppositions in *wh*-questions project universally. The question in (1), for instance, presupposes that the addressee has made all five recipes at least once before.

(1) Which of these five recipes would you make again?

In recent work, however, examples of *wh*-questions have been noted that exhibit weaker projection patterns (Schwarz & Simonenko 2018). I propose a pragmatic solution: by reasoning about question-answer discourse, I arrive at a version of Stalnaker's bridge principle that is sensitive to what the speaker already knows about the true answer to the question. This *Epistemic Bridge* predicts universal projection for canonical information-seeking questions, but less than universal projection for certain non-canonical questions such as quiz questions or reference questions.